

REMARKS

Applicant requests reconsideration and allowance of the subject patent application in light of the changes above and the remarks that follow.¹ By this Amendment, Applicant has amended claims 2-6, 8-15, 18 & 19. In addition, claims 17 & 22 have been cancelled without any prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. Claims 2-15 & 18-21 are now pending.

The Office Action indicates that claim 21 is allowable. Independent claim 15 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 21. Accordingly, the rejection of claim 15 is moot and the claim is allowable over documents applied in the Office Action. Further, the rejections of claim 17 & 22 are moot due to the cancellation of these claims. Claims 2-6, 8-14, 18 & 19 have been amended to depend from claims 15 and 21. Thus, claims 2-6, 8-14, 18 & 19 are allowable at least due to their corresponding dependence on claims 15 and 21.

Consideration of this amendment and allowance of the claims is respectfully requested. If additional fees are required for any reason, please charge Deposit Account No. 02-4800 the necessary amount.

Respectfully submitted,

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¹ The Office Action contains statements characterizing the claims and related art. Regardless of whether any such statements are specifically addressed herein, Applicant's silence as to these characterizations should not be construed as acceptance of them.